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ABSTRACT

Interest is growing in planning and implementing new systems of holding child and family services accountable for results. The Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Project at the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) has supported and built upon recent state efforts to develop these new accountability systems for child and family services. The RBA reports, including this case study, are intended to help share insights and experiences in designing and implementing RBA systems. This report on RBA in Iowa begins with a brief overview, which summarizes the key points in the case study. A section of sociodemographic information and information about the state's governance structure directs the reader to unique qualities of the state that have helped to influence its RBA work. A timeline of the most critical events in the design and implementation of RBA efforts is included, along with a list of the key terms and concepts used in the state. Each separate RBA effort is described in detail, including its history and impetus, those who initially sponsored the effort, and the legal mechanism behind the effort. In addition, the early champions and actors involved in each effort and the funding sources and resources that support the effort are noted, and the governance and coordination between this effort and any others that may exist are described. The design and implementation of each effort are also described in detail, including information about the planning of the effort; the selection of goals, indicators, and targets; the collection of data; and the ways in which stakeholders were involved. The report describes the state infrastructure that supports the effort, such as staff, computer resources, and training. Where applicable, the report describes the way in which program evaluation links to the RBA effort. Each section also includes information about how each effort is being used; the uses include planning, citizen engagement, programming, budgeting and contracting, and communication. A list of key contacts is provided, and a final section describes in detail the objectives, scope, and methodology of the study. The

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report includes a table summarizing points of distinction among RBA efforts in the eight states studied. (EV)

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Aiming for Accountability:
Iowa.
Reaching Results

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AIMING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY:

IOWA

Priscilla Little

Harvard Family Research Project
Cambridge, MA
1998

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HARVARD FAMILY RESEARCH PROJECT

Founded in 1983 by Dr. Heather Weiss, the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) is today at the center of a national movement to promote information regarding how states and communities are developing processes to improve and redesign child and family services and policies. HFRP's pathbreaking research provides practitioners, researchers, and policymakers with timely, insightful information about effective child and family services and policies.

Disseminating its research widely, HFRP links people, programs, ideas, and resources together to create innovative services and family-sustaining policies. HFRP's research helps states and communities create systems to monitor and assess programs and services. Using HFRP research and analysis, schools, agencies, and communities are learning about the best strategies for successful programming to improve child and family outcomes.

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IOWA

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Interest in planning and implementing new systems of holding child and family services accountable for results is growing rapidly — presenting both opportunities and challenges for policymakers, practitioners, and program managers. The Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Project at the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) has supported and built upon recent state efforts to develop these new accountability systems for child and family services.

Recent changes in welfare — with increasing responsibility at the state and local levels — have implications for these new RBA efforts. With welfare reform, states will be challenged to provide effective and efficient services for children and families with fewer resources. States have been given increased flexibility in the administration of programs, and it seems likely that they will be held more accountable for program results. In turn, many states are giving counties increased flexibility in administering these programs and plan to hold local service agencies responsible for results.

Most states are in the early stages of planning and implementing their RBA efforts. However, given the recent devolution of welfare as well as changes in managed care, these new accountability systems appear to be here to stay. While states have many promising approaches, they are finding a need for avenues to share resources and experiences, to learn about these new systems, and to obtain information about pioneering states' efforts. HFRP's RBA reports, including this case study, are intended to help share insights and experiences in designing and implementing RBA systems.

What is Results-Based Accountability?

Policymakers, service providers, and citizens use the term "results-based accountability" in many different ways. For some, this term refers to strategic planning with an emphasis on greater coordination of services around goals and desired results. For others, the term is used to imply a shift in responsibility from the federal to state and local levels and the corresponding reduction in regulation or "red tape" — that is, it refers to a replacement of "process regulations" (such as requiring certain credentials for foster care case workers) with a requirement for results data (such as reduced case loads). For others, the term is used to refer to data collection and reporting efforts.

At a minimum, the RBA efforts described in this report include the following four elements:

- Articulation of a vision about where the state or community would like to be;
- Development of goals and objectives;
- Public reporting of data on progress toward goals and objectives; and
- Regular use of RBA process and data.

Description of the Series

This case study report is part of a series of reports of state RBA efforts. The series includes eight state case studies and a cross-site analysis. The reports are designed to provide information about the design and implementation of the RBA systems in these states. In addition, each case highlights the state's unique lessons learned. The points of distinction of the RBA efforts in each of the eight states in the series are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Points of Distinction of State RBA Efforts

State	Points of Distinction
Florida	Florida's RBA efforts consist of three parts: statewide benchmarks, performance-based budgeting, and agency-level strategic planning. Several aspects of Florida's efforts are notable: • The active support and involvement by a variety of stakeholders, including the legislature and the private sector; • The strong focus on training and technical assistance in the state, provided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and the legislatively-mandated Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability; and • The target budget approach used in the Florida Department of Children and Families, which identifies specific outcomes for the different populations the department serves.
Georgia	Georgia's RBA efforts include three parts: benchmarks for children and families, agency performance budgeting, and decentralization of some social services to the local level in exchange for a focus on results. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the RBA efforts in Georgia: • The top-down and bottom-up approach to RBA, which focuses a variety of stakeholders on results; • The early support by foundations to enable an emphasis on meaningful, people-level results; • The climate of change that supports risk-taking and innovation; and • The establishment of mechanisms to address concerns about locally-determined strategies and accountability as well as statewide oversight.
Iowa	Iowa's RBA efforts consist of statewide measures, agency performance measures, and local-level measures. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the Iowa case: • The use of public opinion polling, which has provided valuable citizen input; • The use of focus groups to enhance the RBA research process; and • Enterprise-wide strategic planning, which provides a framework for collaborative efforts among agencies to achieve common cross-site goals.

Minnesota	Minnesota's RBA efforts consist of statewide measures, child and family measures, agency performance measures, and local performance measures. The following characteristics also distinguish Minnesota: • The existence of multiple RBA efforts with differing origins and emphases, including the Executive Branch Minnesota Milestones, which focus on population-level goals and the legislature's performance accountability for state agencies; • The emphasis on "home grown" services, which leads to grassroots articulation and reporting of results data rather than a centralized RBA approach; and • The refinement of the Milestones and agency performance measures to build on lessons learned and to update the measures to reflect new priorities of the state's citizens.
North Carolina	North Carolina's RBA efforts consist of state agency performance budgeting, and a child and family initiative that focuses on results. In addition, the following characteristics in North Carolina are of note: • The role of the budget and planning offices in training, collecting, and analyzing performance budget data; • The political context in which the child and family initiative has been implemented and the way in which data have been used to expand this initiative; and • The quasi-experimental evaluation design used to measure the success of the child and family services initiative.
Ohio	Ohio's RBA efforts consist of a statewide framework for child and family services, decentralization of social services to the local level in exchange for a focus on results, and a state block grant and a new program that focus child and family services on results. In addition, the following elements in Ohio are noteworthy: • The strong commitment of the governor in supporting results-oriented child and family services; • Comprehensive planning efforts designed to streamline government services by focusing on results; • The greater flexibility given to county Councils in exchange for accountability that focuses on results; and • The messages from the state to the counties regarding state expectations to focus on results.

Oregon	Oregon's RBA efforts consist of a statewide framework for results, agency performance measures, and local measures. In addition, the following characteristics distinguish the efforts in Oregon: • The way in which Oregon has relied on champions as a critical element for success. Leaders in key places — the executive branch, legislature, and private sector — have all been key to the penetration of the concept of the Oregon Benchmarks; • The power of well-trained, highly qualified staff at all levels, which has been critical in designing the RBA effort; • The requirement that the benchmarks and strategic plans be revisited on a regular basis; •Citizen involvement as an element in the success of the RBA effort; and • The continuity of support for RBA efforts at all levels of involvement.
Vermont	Vermont's RBA efforts consist of a framework for child and family outcomes, a Department of Education (DOE) outcomes framework, and measures produced by the Agency of Human Services and the DOE. In addition, the following characteristics are significant: • The importance of establishing relationships and knowing key actors in the design and implementation of the effort; • The small size of the state, which creates relative ease in involving all stakeholders in the effort; and • The importance of foundation funding and technical assistance in establishing the RBA framework and allowing the state to be creative in using resources to implement RBA.

Audience

This case study report is part of our larger effort to disseminate information about RBA initiatives in states. The report is targeted to those responsible for designing and implementing RBA efforts for child and family services. As such, the cases include details about the history, design, implementation, and uses of each effort that could assist in designing and implementing similar efforts.

Format

Overview of Iowa

The report begins with a brief overview which summarizes the key points in the case study.

Iowa Context

A section of sociodemographic information and information about the state's governance structure directs the reader to unique qualities of the state that have helped to influence its RBA work. In addition, a description of the history and state/local culture provides details about the environment.

Timeline
The report includes a timeline of the most critical events in the design and implementation of the RBA efforts.

Terms and Concepts
A list of the key terms and concepts used in the state is included. Currently no standard set of definitions of RBA terms exists. States use similar terms for different concepts, and different terms for similar concepts. Additionally, we provide a list of acronyms specific to each state's RBA efforts.

Description of Each of Iowa's RBA Efforts
Each separate RBA effort is described in detail in the case study. Each of these separate efforts is described in bold and begins a new chapter. Each section begins with a description of the history and impetus of the effort, including a description of those who initially sponsored the effort (such as the governor, legislature, or agency). We also describe the legal mechanism behind the effort (such as Executive Order, legislative mandate, etc.). In addition, the early champions and actors involved in each effort and the funding sources and resources that support the effort are noted. We also describe the governance and coordination between this effort and any others that may be in existence in the state.

The design and implementation of each effort are also described in detail. We include information about the planning of the effort (including a description of strategic planning efforts); the selection of goals, indicators, and targets; the collection of data; and the ways in which stakeholders were involved. In addition, we describe the state "infrastructure" that supports the effort, such as staff, computer resources, and training. Finally, where applicable, we describe the way in which program evaluation — specifically outcome evaluation efforts — links to the RBA effort.

Each section also includes information about how each effort is being used. The uses include planning, citizen engagement, programming, budgeting and contracting, and communication. In certain instances, the uses have yet to be determined.

Key Contacts
A list of key contacts familiar with different aspects of the effort is provided. This list is included in order to direct the reader to the experts who are most knowledgeable about many of the details of this report.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology
This section explains in detail the objectives of the study, the methodology used, and the range of states included in the series.

OVERVIEW OF IOWA

Unique Features of Iowa's RBA Efforts

Iowa's multi-sector results effort touches on the work of all executive branch state agencies and is linked with the movement toward budgeting for results. Three key features of Iowa's experience provide useful insight into how RBA systems can develop:

- The use of public opinion polling which provided valuable citizen input;
- The use of focus groups to enhance the RBA research process; and
- Enterprise-wide strategic planning which provides a framework for collaborative efforts among agencies to achieve common cross-site goals.

Summary of Iowa's RBA Efforts

There are five main efforts ongoing in Iowa, each linked to the statewide goal of using overarching policy outcomes to guide programming.

The Council on Human Investment (CHI): The CHI, housed in the Department of Management, is responsible for developing and sponsoring a system of performance management for all of Iowa state government. Created in 1993 as a bipartisan council, CHI was charged with developing an outcomes-based performance budget, an investment budget model, and methods to determine returns on investments. Chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, CHI has representation from education, human services, small and large businesses, labor, local service providers, transportation, and local government. An important, and early aspect of CHI's efforts was to hire independent researchers to conduct a large-scale public opinion survey to determine Iowans' human service priorities. After CHI obtained the results from the poll, a series of focus groups was held across the state to round out the data collected by the poll. These activities proved valuable in determining Iowa's RBA priorities.

Innovation Zones' RBA Focus: Within the CHI sits the Innovation Zones Board, which oversees the Innovation Zones. These zones, selected in April 1997, are community collaboratives working in partnership with the state to redirect public funds in order to achieve improved outcomes for children and their families. The collaborative nature of these zones reflects Iowa's commitment to foster new relationships among state and local agencies.

Department of Management (DOM) Strategic Planning: In September 1996, the DOM proposed a "planning continuum" to ensure consistency across all agencies as they implement a results-based service delivery system. Central to the plan is the use of overarching policy outcomes to set agency goals. Once agency goals are established, a new round of planning occurs where agencies work together to form an enterprise-wide (i.e., inter-agency) strategic plan. The purpose of the enterprise-wide planning is to achieve common cross-state goals with collaboration, not duplication.

Budgeting For Results (BFR): The multi-agency BFR Task Force developed a system of results-based budgeting for the Iowa state government. The three-step BFR approach links resource allocation, performance measurement, and policymaking. Overarching policy objectives serve as the foundation of the BFR model. The Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board provides the reader with a good example of how BFR is used.

Department of Human Services (DHS) Strategic Planning: The DHS has developed a strategic plan that identifies goals and time frames for the defining of results, indicators, and performance measures, and a plan for doing so in collaboration with stakeholders. Four DHS key outcomes teams have been designated to focus on the four outcome areas of self-sufficiency, stability, safety, and health for families. They work on developing agency-, program-, and client-level outcomes, as well as indicators, strategies, rationales, and inventories of services.

IOWA BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sociodemographic and Economic Status[1]

In 1995, Iowa had a population of 2.8 million. It was a predominantly Caucasian state: 97 percent of its residents were Caucasian, 2 percent were African-American, and only 1 percent represented other ethnic minorities. Based on 1990 census data, only 1.7 percent of Iowa's residents were immigrants; 78 percent of Iowa's population was born in the state; and an additional 14 percent were born in the Midwest. In 1995, 25 percent of Iowa's residents were under the age of 18, which was just lower than the national average of 26.2 percent.

In 1995, Iowa's per capita income was $20,921; the median income of families with children was $38,200. In 1995, 12.2 percent of the state's population had incomes that fell below the federal poverty line, which was lower than the national average of 13.8 percent in that same year. Similarly, only 13 percent of all children under the age of 18 lived in poverty, compared to the national average of 20.8 percent. In 1995, the unemployment rate in Iowa was 3.4 percent; this was below the U.S. rate of 5.3 percent, ranking Iowa 45th in statewide unemployment.

Political Context for Children and Families[2]

Iowa has a predominantly Republican legislature. Its governor, Terry E. Branstad (R), has been in office since 1982; both the House and Senate are controlled by the Republican party as well. Like other states in this series, Iowa's legislature is considered to be "hybrid," in between full- and part-time;[3] it meets 100 to 110 days per year, with no term limits.

In Iowa, the Department of Human Services, a state agency, has jurisdiction over all programs for children and families. Each county has an elected board of commissioners that has the authority to provide assistance to families who are in immediate need and are awaiting approval or receipt of state and/or federal funds. However, all other child and family services are

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[1] Information for this section was obtained from the following sources: Morgan, K.O., and Morgan, S. (1997). *State rankings, 1997: A statistical overview of the 50 United States*. Lawrence, KS: Morgan Quinto Press; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current population survey* and *state poverty rates*, online at www.census.gov; U.S. Department of Labor, *Bureau of Labor statistics*; *Statistical abstract of the United States, 1996*. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. (116th Edition); *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being*. (1997). Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation. Most data are from 1995. Data from the *KIDS COUNT data book* reflect the condition of children and families in 1994.

[2] Information for this section was obtained from multiple sources, including: *The book of states, 1996-1997*. Lexington, KY: The Council of State Government; U.S. Term Limits, online at www.termlimits.org; and interviews with members of state, county, and local officials.

[3] Defined by Karl Kurtz, of the National Council of State Legislatures, as having a low pay, small staff, and high turnover. See *Understanding the diversity of American state legislatures, extension of remarks*. (June 1992).

administered at the state level. Iowa ranks 5th based on a composite ranking of indicators of child well-being.[4] Table 2, a selected listing of the child risk factors illustrates, this rating.

Table 2. Child Risk Factors

Rating	Year	State	U.S.
% of two-year olds who were immunized	1995	82%	75%
% of children in extreme poverty (below 50% FPL)	1994	5%	9%
% of 4th grade students who scored below basic reading level	1994	31%	41%
% of 4th grade students who scored below basic math level	1996	26%	38%
% of low birth-weight babies	1994	5.9%	7.3%
% of teen birth rate (births per 1,000 females ages 15-17)	1994	23%	38%

Local Culture[5]

Although Iowa has the distinction of having the highest proportion of land used for farming of any state, the economy is no longer dominated solely by agriculture. As in other Midwestern states, industry is slowly replacing farming as the leading source of income. Formerly a strictly Republican state, Iowa is shifting toward a two-party system. This shift has resulted in a more progressive state legislature. As in Minnesota, Iowa's early settlers brought with them a tradition and belief that government exists for the common good. In Iowa, however, this spirit is tempered by a strong individualistic culture (reflected in the Republican party) that, at times, conflicts with the more liberal approach.

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[4] KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being.* (1997). Baltimore: Annie E. Casey Foundation, provides data on the educational, social, economic and physical well-being of children.

[5] Information for this section was compiled from Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, Encyclopedia Americana, and Elazar, D.J. (1984). *American federalism: A view from the states* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Crowell, as well as from key informant interviews.

TIMELINE

1988
- Welfare Reform Council and Work Group are created

1991
- State Human Investment Policy Council publishes *Iowa Invests*

1993
- Senate file 286 passes, creating the bipartisan Council on Human Investment (CHI)
- CHI charged with establishing a system of performance management for state government

1994
- Statewide poll is conducted to determine Iowans' priorities
- Statewide focus groups are conducted to enhance results of the poll

1995
- Iowa's benchmarks are ratified
- Budgeting for Results Task Force is established
- Department of Human Services begins the transition to results-based program implementation

1996
- Legislation for Innovation Zones passed
- Department of Management proposes a new strategic plan with overarching policy objectives (formerly termed *benchmarks*) as a foundation

1997
- Innovation Zones becomes operational

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Currently no standard set of definitions of RBA terms exists. States use similar terms for different concepts, and different terms for similar concepts. Table 3 describes the terms and concepts used by Iowa. Table 4 summarizes the acronyms used in this report.

Table 3. Key Concepts

Mission Statement: Conceptual image of core values
Overarching Policy Objective: Desired long-term conditions of well-being for children, families, or communities
Outcome: Quantifiable measures of progress toward objectives and goals

Table 4. Key Acronyms

BFR:	Budgeting for Results
CHI:	Council on Human Investment
DHS:	Department of Human Services
DOM:	Department of Management
ICFCRB:	Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board
ROI:	Return on Investment
RBA:	Results-Based Accountability
SHIP:	State Human Investment Policy Council

THE COUNCIL ON HUMAN INVESTMENT: IOWA'S FIRST STEP TOWARD RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

The Council on Human Investment (CHI) is Iowa's answer to a call for a cross-sector, multi-agency approach to establishing results-based accountability (RBA) for the entire state. While not a policy-making entity, CHI is actively involved in shaping a strategy for human investment at all levels of Iowa state government.

History of the Council on Human Investment

Breakthrough Legislation Launches Iowa on Its Path toward Establishing Benchmarks, Iowa's "Standards of Excellence"

Iowa's efforts to develop a human investment strategy began in 1991, but have their roots in Governor Branstad's 1988 Executive Order creating the Welfare Reform Council and Work Group. The Council and Work Group made up an interdisciplinary collaborative that developed a series of first-in-the-nation initiatives to move welfare recipients toward self-sufficiency. In 1991 the Work Group and Council expanded to include representatives from labor; business; community-based organizations; the legislature; current and former welfare recipients; community colleges; public health; employment agencies; management; human rights; economic development; and human services.[6] This expanded group became known as the State Human Investment Policy Council (SHIP). SHIP began to struggle with the question, "How do we reform the public assistance system to create a culture that encourages and rewards work, supports families, and provides consequences for non-compliance?" The larger question, "How do we help Iowans leave or avoid poverty and reconnect with their communities?" became the basis for SHIP's mission statement, as articulated in its document *Iowa Invests.* [7]

As recommended in Iowa Invests, SHIP's efforts culminated in breakthrough legislation, Senate File 286 (passed in July 1993), creating the bipartisan CHI. CHI's mission is to develop and implement a system of performance management for state government in Iowa. It is charged with the establishment of benchmarks (outcome-based performance measures for programs), an outcome-based performance budget, an investment budget model, and a methodology to determine the return on investment.[8] CHI is staffed by state Department of Management (DOM) personnel and chaired by Lieutenant Governor Joy Corning. It has members appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. These members are intended to represent Iowa's geographic, economic, and demographic diversity. Sectors represented include education, human services, small and large business, labor, local service providers, transportation, and local

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[6] Corporation for Enterprise Development, contracted by State Human Investment Policy Council . (1992). *Iowa invests: A human investment plan.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

[7] Corporation for Enterprise Development, contracted by Iowa Human Investment Policy Council. (1992). *Iowa invests: A human investment plan.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

[8] The Council on Human Investment. (1995). *People's priorities: Iowa benchmark report, executive summary.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

government. Additionally, two Republicans and two Democrats, one each from the House and the Senate, also serve on the Council.[9]

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators

Research Reveals Iowans' Priorities: The Establishment of Benchmarks

The first priority of CHI was to develop a long-term investment strategy that included *benchmarks*, that is, broad, long-term, measurable policy goals that speak to changing a social or economic condition, usually expressed in terms of a rate or ratio.[10] Based on their importance to the economic and social well-being of the state, as well as on the presence of existing measures, the Council determined that the areas of strong families, workforce development, and economic development would provide good starting points for the benchmarking process.[11] It was hoped that within each area, three to five benchmarks could be identified that would broadly reflect the priorities of the Iowa public. Given the state's commitment to citizen participation, public input from a cross-sector of the population was deemed crucial to the identification of these goals. It was felt that the "benchmarks developed through the public opinion poll are powerful messages from the citizens of Iowa to policy makers in government."[12]

The question for Iowa was how to elicit public input in order to tap a cross-section of the population. Learning from Oregon (See *Aiming for Accountability: Oregon*), where public input was obtained through a series of publicly advertised forums, the Council was concerned that the forum model might inhibit participation among individuals for whom transportation, family and work schedules, or child care was problematic. Council members sought a more scientifically valid research method, and concluded that a statewide poll would be the best vehicle for determining Iowans' priorities.

CHI called together a group of researchers from universities, colleges, and the private sector to design and implement a large-scale telephone survey. Strategic plans from state and local agencies, as well as the private sector were reviewed to identify potential benchmarks. Based on these documents, a preliminary questionnaire was sent to a select group of community leaders and individuals identified as knowledgeable in the three priority areas. Using their feedback, the research group refined and expanded the questionnaire (See Table 5), and in September and October 1994, using random digit dialing techniques, the University of Iowa Social Science Institute and the University of Northern Iowa Center for Social and Behavioral Research

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[9] Council on Human Investment. (1995). *Iowa statewide benchmark survey: Draft report.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

[10] Since we conducted our research in 1997, Iowa has changed its terminology to reflect more current RBA practice. The term *benchmark* has been replaced with *overarching policy objective.*

[11] As of 1996, benchmarks had also been ratified for the priority areas of Healthy Iowans and Strong Communities. Additional benchmarks in the areas of government, justice, and the environment will be developed.

[12] The Council on Human Investment. (1995). *People's priorities.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

conducted a statewide scientific poll of 850 adults residing in Iowa. With the exception of gender (65% female) the demographics of the sample population reflected the overall Iowa population, predominantly Caucasian, with a range of income and educational backgrounds (For a complete description of the methodology, see *Iowa Statewide Benchmark Survey*, 1995).

Table 5. Excerpt from Iowa's Public Opinion Poll, 1994[13]

On a scale from 1 to 7, how great a priority do you believe should be placed on:

- An increase in the proportion of people able to access quality child care
- A reduction of pregnancies among girls 17 and younger
- A reduction in the proportion of children needing to be placed out of the home due to abuse, neglect, or delinquency;

This next group of goals related to strong families has to do with poverty:

- A reduction in the proportion of children living in poverty
- An increase in the proportion of parents providing court-ordered child support payments
- A reduction in the proportion of families needing welfare benefits
- A reduction in the average length of time families need welfare benefits
- A decrease in the proportion of children who might be hungry.

From Survey to Benchmarks: How Focus Groups Enhanced the Research Process

Respondents were asked to rate all items on a seven-point scale. In the final analysis, none of the items was deemed of low priority by Iowans. That is, Iowans felt that all of the goals listed on the survey were of equally high priority. Thus, rather than trying to prioritize the benchmarks list on their own, CHI called upon researchers to conduct statewide focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to enhance the survey data by interacting with Iowans in a different, more informal setting. Although attendance at the focus group meetings was lower than researchers had hoped, they felt confident that the participants were representative of the communities in which they lived.

The rich information recorded during focus group meetings served to confirm the information collected in the survey while helping the Council refine Iowans' priorities. Using a synthesis of survey and focus group data, CHI regrouped the survey items into primary, or overarching, benchmarks that represent organizing themes and individual benchmarks that represent policy outcomes within the overarching benchmarks. This enabled them to be responsive to Iowans who felt that all the items were important, while organizing the comprehensive list into a more manageable format, in part based on the information collected during the focus groups. For

[13] Council on Human Investment. (1995). *Iowa statewide benchmark survey: Draft report.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

example, eight overarching benchmarks emerged under the priority area of Strategies for Strong Families. They are listed in detail (Table 6), as well as an example of the relationship between overarching benchmarks and individual benchmarks (Table 7). Since the thrust of this report is on state efforts for children and families, we refer the reader to the *Iowa Statewide Benchmarks Survey, 1995*, for a complete listing of overarching and individual benchmarks under the priority areas of Workforce and Economic Development.

Table 6. Example of Benchmarks[14]

Eight Benchmarks for Strong Families:

- Improve the self-sufficiency of Iowans by increasing the proportion living above the poverty level;
- A reduction in the abuse of alcohol and other drugs;
- Increase the overall level of educational attainment;
- Reduce the crime rate;
- A reduction in loss of productive years of life;
- A reduction in pregnancy among girls age 17 and younger;
- A reduction in the incidence of child abuse cases; and
- A reduction in the proportion of children needing to be placed out of the home due to abuse, neglect, or delinquency.

Table 7. Example of Overarching and Individual Benchmarks[15]

Overarching Benchmark:

- Improve the self-sufficiency of Iowans through increasing the proportion of Iowans living above the poverty line.

Individual Benchmarks:

- A decrease in the proportion of children who are hungry;
- An increase in the proportion of parents providing court-ordered child-support payments;
- A reduction in the proportion of children living in poverty;
- A reduction in the average length of time families need welfare benefits;
- An increase in the proportion of affordable housing units; and
- An increase in the proportion of people able to access quality child care.

[14] Council on Human Investment. (1995). *Iowa statewide benchmark survey: Draft report.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

[15] Council on Human Investment. (1995). *Iowa statewide benchmark survey. Draft report.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

Uses of Overarching Policy Outcomes Data

Outcomes Data Used to Establish State Policy Goals
After the benchmarks were ratified, state policy goals were established, articulating the desired results of coordinated actions that contribute to achieving a specific primary benchmark. The state policy goals were identified through public opinion survey, legislative mandate, and executive recommendation, and presented to the CHI for ratification. In many instances, the state policy goals are a restatement of the individual benchmarks identified above; in some cases, additional state policy goals are added for clarification. For example, for the benchmark "reduction in loss of productive years of life," CHI lists two individual benchmarks:

- An increase in the proportion of children who have completed the basic immunization series by two years of age; and
- Expansion of health care coverage of families not currently covered by insurance.

However, for that same benchmark, three state policy goals were ratified. Two goals are the same as the individual benchmarks stated above. The third goal, " to improve trauma care in Iowa in order to reduce preventable deaths, minimize human suffering, and decrease morbidity," reflects additional input from citizens and policymakers.

An important distinction between benchmarks and state policy goals lies in the time frame for attainment. Benchmarks carry a 10-20 year time frame, whereas the attainment of any given state policy goal is expected within 3-5 years, with continuous review. For a complete description of benchmarks and state policy goals, see *Building Tomorrow Today*, the strategic plan for the DOM.

It is important to note that state policy goals are not the same as individual agency goals. State goals represent goals for state government as a whole, whereas agency goals represent the individual goals of an agency as it attempts to develop strategies that will contribute to the attainment of state goals.

Overarching Policy Objectives:[16] *The Cornerstone of Iowa's RBA Efforts*
Iowa's overarching policy objectives provide a "clear and uncomplicated message of where Iowans want government to focus and what they want government to accomplish or change."[17] They symbolize the people's priorities in certain policy areas and help establish standards of performance for state government. As such, they have become the cornerstone of all subsequent RBA efforts in Iowa. First and foremost, they have become the basis for establishing results-oriented performance measures for individual programs across all sectors of state government.

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[16] As stated above, Iowa updated its terminology and has replaced *benchmark* with *overarching policy objective*. Hereafter in this case study, we will do the same.

[17] Council on Human Investment. (1995). *Iowa statewide benchmark survey: Draft report*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

"Performance measures for programs must be stated in terms of changes in social or economic conditions for the group of Iowans using the services offered through each program. This moves the focus of government away from measuring process to measuring real results for people."[18] The overarching policy objectives are the cornerstone of the strategic planning processes for the DOM and the DHS (See section on Department of Management) and performance measures help link budget decisions to priorities established by Iowans, using the Budgeting for Results model (See section on Department of Human Services). Eventually, overarching policy objectives will be used to guide the calculation of a Return on Investment (ROI) for publicly funded programs. ROI will provide citizens and policymakers information about which service strategies are providing the greatest impact on achieving overarching policy objectives. In sum, Iowa's overarching policy objectives help to establish a focus for Iowa state government by influencing public policy decision makers; verifying the opinion of Iowa's citizens; providing context for strategic planning efforts; and displaying changing trends.

[18] Council on Human Investment. (1995). *Iowa statewide benchmark survey: Draft report.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

INNOVATION ZONES: A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH TO IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

In an effort to bring RBA to the local level, the CHI proposed legislation (signed into law in July 1996[19]) enabling local jurisdictions to establish community partnerships to redirect existing public funds to achieve improved outcomes for children and their families.[20] Any legally organized entity, public or private, is eligible to become an Innovation Zone, provided it meets the following six criteria:

- It enters into a collaboration with both public and private sector organizations and uses a multi-sector approach in making decisions regarding service delivery and funding;
- It clearly states improved results for families and children, and illustrates an alignment of the results with at least one of the CHI overarching policy objectives;
- It proposes multi-sector, community-based strategies, including a description of the methodology used to obtain initial and ongoing input from the community;
- It demonstrates a previous and successful history of collaboration with other entities;
- It offers evidence of the commitment of other entities in entering into the collaboration; and
- It identifies existing funding to be used in the Innovation Zone plan, as well as a commitment of any new money generated from local resources.

Once an Innovation Zone has been established, it comes under the supervision of the Innovation Zone Board, composed of CHI members. The Board is responsible for reviewing Innovation Zone applications and ensuring that local jurisdictions are accountable for the funding they receive by having them articulate results of the services in terms of at least one of the CHI overarching policy objectives.

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[19] See Innovation Zones legislation for exact copy of bill. Senate file 2470. Section 61. 8A.2

[20] Council on Human Investment. (1996). *Innovation zones: Request for application.* Des Moines, IA: Author. This document also includes a copy of the actual bill, Senate File 2470, pp.30-33.

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ENTERPRISE-WIDE RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

In 1996, the Department of Management (DOM) proposed a "planning continuum" to ensure consistency across all agencies as they implement a results-based service delivery system. Central to the plan is the use of overarching policy outcomes to set agency goals. Once agency goals are established, a new round of planning occurs where agencies work together to form an enterprise-wide (i.e., inter-agency) strategic plan. The purpose of the enterprise-wide planning is to achieve common cross-state goals with collaboration, not duplication.

History of DOM's Effort

In September 1996 the DOM set forth a planning framework to guide agencies of Iowa state government in strategic planning. The purpose of strategic planning was to build a "foundation that aligns agency goals and strategies with customer needs (i.e., overarching policy objectives) and utilizes scarce resources more effectively by investing in strategies that target desired results."[21] To that end, the DOM developed a "planning continuum" that begins at the agency specific level and expands to identify critical issues to be addressed at the enterprise-wide (i.e., inter-agency) planning level.

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators

Agency Planning Cycle: An Ongoing Effort
According to the DOM, "agency strategic planning [should be] an ongoing effort that envisions a future and determines what an individual state agency intends to do to create that future."[22] It should be conducted by agency leaders, with input from customers, employees, and other stakeholders who might have an interest in the specific agency.

Under the DOM's strategic plan, all state agencies are asked to conduct a strategic planning process, complete with a specific set of seven products. Underlying each plan should be an awareness of the CHI overarching policy objectives and an articulation of which benchmark the agency's plan addresses. The seven steps in the strategic planning process are as follows:

Vision statement:	Crafted through teamwork, a vision statement represents what the future should look like as a result of the efforts of a specific agency.
Mission statement:	A mission statement defines what the agency is and why it exists.

[21] Department of Management. (1996). *Building tomorrow today*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

[22] Department of Management. (1996). *Building tomorrow today*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

Guiding principles:	Guiding principles articulate the core values and philosophies that an agency endorses in order to carry out its mission statement. The DOM has established seven principles for all Iowa state government agencies. They must be customer focused, be results/outcome oriented, employ long-term thinking, use data-based decisions, process improvement, foster collaboration, and encourage empowerment.
Internal and external assessments:	Internal assessment identifies the strengths and limitations of an agency, especially as they relate to agency performance. External assessment examines outside factors that might influence an agency's ability to achieve intended results.
3-5 year goals:	Agency goals are the expected results to be achieved based on the mission and vision statements. Wherever possible, the 3-5 year agency goals should be aligned with the CHI overarching policy objectives and state policy goals.
Strategies:	Strategies operationalize how goals will be achieved.
Performance measures:	Performance measures are used to evaluate progress toward achieving goals. They quantify the changes that have occurred as a result of agency programs or activities.

An example of how the DOM's strategic plan has been implemented by a specific agency is described below (See section on *Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board*). The DOM is cognizant that some agencies already have a planning process in place; it is DOM's hope that they will update existing plans based on the process outlined above.

Uses of DOM's Agency Wide Planning Efforts

Enterprise-Wide Strategic Planning: "An Example of the Right Hand Knowing What the Left Hand Is Doing"

According to the DOM's strategic plan, the seven steps outlined above are meant as a guide to assist every agency in their effort to develop a strategic plan that will be consistent with the plans of other agencies. Enterprise-wide strategic planning carries agency efforts one step further by providing a framework for collaborative efforts among agencies to achieve common cross-state goals. The overall vision of the enterprise-wide planning process is "to establish Iowa state government as the recognized leader among states in promoting and providing quality services; helping to make Iowa unsurpassed as a place to live, work, and pursue individual, family, and

community goals."[23] Once statewide critical issues have been determined through the governor's office, enterprise-wide strategic planning begins with the seven-step process (described above) used at the agency level, including suggestions for collaboration among agencies where appropriate. Table 8 provides an example of how the Iowa's foundation for strategic planning incorporates the governor's overall goals, the governor's strategies for achieving those goals, and the issues that the enterprise-wide planning teams must address as they try to implement the goals statewide.

Table 8. Iowa's Foundation for Strategic Planning[24]

Governor's overall goals for the year 2000:

- Create 300,000 new jobs;
- Increase median family income to $40,000; and
- Grow every county (jobs, income, or population).

Governor's strategies (for the area of promoting strong, stable families):

- Build strong, safe, healthy communities for people of all ages; and
- Support stable two-parent families.

Issues to be addressed by the 1996 Enterprise-Wide Planning Teams:

- Rural development;
- Aging population;
- Justice system;
- Youth violence; and
- Breakdown of the two-parent family.

[23] Department of Management. (1996). *Building tomorrow today*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

[24] Department of Management. (1996). *Building tomorrow today*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

BUDGETING FOR RESULTS: IOWA'S SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Once agencies have developed a strategic plan as recommended by the DOM, the next step is to adopt a Budgeting for Results (BFR) model. The three-step BFR approach ties outcomes to resources through: definition of desired results; determination of cost of a unit of services to achieve the desired results; and calculation of how many of the desired results can be attained with the resources budgeted. Overarching policy objectives (formerly called *benchmarks*) and results-oriented performance measures provide the foundation for BFR.

History of Budgeting for Results Effort

Established by CHI in 1995, a Task Force was created to oversee the implementation of BFR. It represents 12 agencies, with ongoing input from the Legislative Fiscal Bureau.[25] The BFR Task Force's first undertaking was to produce a "Technical and Training Manual" to assist agencies in developing results-oriented performance measures.[26] Central to the manual is the notion that for results to drive a budget, they must be measurable. Thus, the manual highlights several key principles that are necessary to make performance measures meaningful:

- Measures must be results-oriented: that is, they must focus principally on desired results, not outputs;
- Measures must be selective, concentrating only on the significant indicators of performance;
- Measures must be reliable;
- Data collected must be useful to policy and program decision makers;
- Measures must be expressed in terms of real numbers, rates, or percentages; and
- Measures must be simple and realistic.[27]

It will be the responsibility of the Task Force to help agencies "collect data that tie service efforts to results expressed in quantifiable changes in social and economic conditions," and to do so in a realistic time frame (i.e., two to three years).[28]

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[25] Budgeting for Results Task Force. (1995). *Iowa, budgeting for results: Introduction*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

[26] Budgeting for Results Task Force. (1995). *Iowa, budgeting for results: Technical and training manual*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

[27] Budgeting for Results Task Force. (1995). *Iowa, budgeting for results: Technical and training manual*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

[28] Budgeting for Results Task Force. (1995). *Iowa, budgeting for results: Technical and training manual*. Des Moines, IA: Author.

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators

To assist agencies, the Task Force developed a BFR worksheet that must include the following information from both the agency and the enterprise-wide planning levels: the CHI priority area; the benchmark that applies to the specific agency's programs; the policy goals that apply to the program; the service delivery strategy; and the performance measures developed to calculate the cost per unit of service. Units of service will be defined based on the stated policy goals and will be described in terms of a results adopted as a standard measurement. Table 9 is a sample BFR worksheet from Iowa's Department of Public Safety.

Table 9. Budgeting for Results Pilot Project Worksheet[29]

Enterprise-Wide Level	
Priority Area	Strategies for strong families
Benchmark	A reduction in the abuse of alcohol and other drugs
State Policy Goal	A reduction in deaths among people 15-24 caused by alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes
Agency Level	
Service Delivery System	Support of state's OWI enforcement efforts through the laboratory analysis of specimen samples
Program Performance Measure	Return to submitting agency blood alcohol level of 90% of blood and urine samples submitted for analysis within 10 working days of submission

In fiscal year 1997, selected programs in each of the following departments were to have implemented the BFR model: Corrections, Economic Development, Education, Employment Services, Human Services, Inspections and Appeals, and Public Health. It is hoped that all agencies will use the BFR model by fiscal year 2000, and will do so without feeling threatened. Iowa documents clearly state that the BFR model is not in place as an evaluative tool to assess the merits of a specific agency; rather, it is meant as a vehicle for improving service strategies and achieving better outcomes.[30]

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[29] Iowa Department of Public Safety. (1996). *Budgeting for results presentation to the Justice System Joint Appropriations Subcommittee.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

[30] Budgeting for Results Task Force. (1995). *Iowa, budgeting for results.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

Uses of BFR Model

The Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board: BFR in Action

The Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board (ICFCRB) is a public-private partnership established in 1994 by the Iowa legislature to provide citizens with a specific structure and legal base for increasing community involvement and responsibility for the development and funding of services to Iowa's children and families. The primary focus of the agency is on efforts to create and maintain permanent, healthy families. The ICFCRB example (Table 10) illustrates how an agency has adopted the DOM's strategic plan and attempted to use the BFR model to evaluate its service delivery strategies and make itself accountable to the citizens of Iowa by aligning service strategies with a CHI benchmark.

Table 10. The ICFCRB Budgeting for Results Model [31]

Vision:	To protect and ensure a high quality of life for all Iowa children and families by assuring for children in foster care.
Mission:	To provide local communities with citizen volunteers who will help establish programs and services that will promote stable and nurturing foster care homes.
Goals:	To increase the number of children placed out of the foster care system into permanent homes, and to increase the number of community connections supporting community involvement in developing and funding services for Iowa children and families. Note that these two goals directly address an Iowa benchmark in the policy area of Strong Families.
Service Delivery Strategy:	The ICFCRB has proposed a service delivery strategy of collaboration with communities, private agencies, and public agencies that have programs involved in strengthening families.
Performance Measures:	Data will be collected regarding the cost per unit of performance. For the ICFCRB, a unit of performance is defined as "the number of communities and activities actually being delivered in the fiscal year to impact permanency." Types of data to be collected include increases in the number of foster care homes and church participation in adoption programs, as well as data on barriers to service, and amount of time and funding contributed by citizens, and the public sector.

[31] Iowa Citizens Foster Care Review Board. (1997). *Strategic plan: Prepared for the Department of Management.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES: A MOVE TOWARD OUTCOMES-BASED MEASURES

In early 1995, following the lead of the Council on Human Investment, the Department of Human Services (DHS) began its strategic planning process. Aware that Iowa must shift from performance-based to outcomes-based planning, DHS developed a strategic plan that identifies goals and time frames for the defining of results, indicators, and performance measures, and a plan for how to do so in collaboration with stakeholders. Central to the vision of the strategic plan is the notion of RBA, using overarching policy objectives to guide the goals and strategies of the department.

Process of Identifying Goals and Indicators

The Transition to Results-Focused Implementation

Given the shift toward outcomes-based planning, the DHS developed a guide for the transition to a results-focused program implementation. The guide proposes a five-phase model that begins with the definition of results and indicators. This first phase includes input from DHS, program managers, direct service coordinators, and stakeholders. Phase two inventories existing strategies and performance measures and relates them to results and indicators, identifying voids in the ability to measure results and/or the ability to link strategies to results. Phase three aligns data collection and data systems with indicators and performance measures; it requires that DHS determine specific data needs and sources, and identify the resources necessary to access and collect the data. In phase four, data are analyzed by asking: what do the data tell us? How does it relate to the results desired? What modifications to the data retrieval system are indicated? Finally, phase five modifies current strategies or develops new strategies based on the results of phase four data analysis.

A Tiered Approach to Human Services

As a result of the new strategic planning model, DHS has initiated outcome- and results-oriented efforts at all levels of planning, ranging from statewide to client. Outcomes, indicators, and strategies for efforts in the areas of mental health, developmental disabilities, targeted case management, child welfare, and child support recovery are articulated from the general (at the state level) to the specific (at the client level) and represent a cohesive, unified attempt for all levels to work together on common goals. For example, based on the *statewide* CHI priority area, "Strong Families," DHS has identified key outcomes at the *agency level*. At this level, key outcomes teams define agency level indicators and performance measures that relate to one of the four primary conditions recognized by DHS as requisite to the well-being of families in Iowa: self-sufficiency, stability, health, and safety. Once outcomes, strategies and performance measures for each condition have been established by key outcomes teams at the agency level, the process repeats itself: outcomes, strategies, and performance measures are established at the *program level*. Finally, *client-specific* outcomes, strategies, and performance measures are established. Table 11 illustrates this process with an example from the key outcomes team working on self-sufficiency.

Table 11. DHS's Tiered Approach to Human Service Delivery[32]

STATEWIDE LEVEL	
Outcomes/Results:	Strong Families: improve the self-sufficiency of Iowans (CHI priority area and Iowa benchmark).
Indicator:	Proportion of Iowans living above poverty.
Strategies:	Increase the proportion of parents providing court-ordered child support (CHI policy goal). A reduction in the proportion of families needing welfare benefits (CHI policy goal).
AGENCY LEVEL	
Outcomes/Results:	Individuals and families have sufficient income to meet and provide for basic needs.
Indicator:	% of FIP recipients with earnings.
Strategies (general):	Provide for basic needs; provide services and supports.
Performance Measures:	# families leaving FIP with earnings. # of families participating in FaDDS.
PROGRAM LEVEL	
Outcomes/Results:	Individuals receiving FIP and PJ services achieve their highest potential for self-sufficiency.
Strategies (specific):	Reinforce personal responsibility and goal setting through the FIA process. Provide education and training to increase potential for self-sufficiency.
Performance Measures:	# of families on FIP with earned income # of individuals completing FIA successfully Average wage level for FIP families
CLIENT LEVEL	
Outcomes/Results:	Jane Doe* will become self-sufficient.
Strategies (client specific):	Jane Doe* will complete GED and participate in Promise Jobs; seek work component to become employed full time.
Performance Measures:	GED completion. Jane Doe's wage.

*Jane Doe refers to an individual client.

[32] Department of Human Services. (1996). *Relating the DHS model to the Council on Human Investment Benchmark Initiative: Applying the model, an illustration.* Des Moines, IA: Author.

CONCLUSION:
ENTERPRISE-WIDE PLANNING: THE NEXT PHASE OF RBA PLANNING

Iowa's RBA efforts began in 1988 with the formation of the Welfare Reform Council and Work Group. Ten years later, Iowa has a solid system in place for agency-level RBA. The next challenge for Iowa is to carry its RBA efforts a step further by developing a framework for collaborative efforts among agencies to achieve statewide goals as articulated by the governor's office. Through the Department of Management, enterprise-wide (i.e., inter-agency) planning teams have begun to look at some of the major issues facing the state (youth violence, an aging population, the breakdown of the two-parent family) and to expand their agency-level RBA system to a statewide level.

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OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives

The objective of this case study is to describe the design, development, and implementation of Iowa's RBA efforts, particularly those related to programs serving children and families. This report is directed toward people who are interested in learning about the efforts of this state and/or who may have a role in developing an RBA system in their own state, locality, or institution. The case study discusses the key RBA efforts in the state, the impetus for and history of these efforts, the governance structures, the design and implementation of these efforts (including the identification of goals, indicators, and targets), the current or proposed use of the systems, and some of the lessons learned.

Scope

HFRP has produced RBA case studies of eight states: Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, and Vermont. The research for these case studies was conducted between January 1996 and November 1997.

Methodology

HFRP staff utilized qualitative data collection methodologies to gather the information included in these case studies. Staff began the selection of the eight states chosen for our case studies by contacting key informants from national organizations who have been working in the area of RBA. These key informants nominated a number of states that were currently planning, designing, and/or implementing RBA systems for child and family programs. HFRP staff then contacted staff in these states and reviewed documents to learn more about the nature of their efforts. Additionally, HFRP contacted staff in a number of other states to learn if they were engaged in the development of RBA systems for child and family programs and, if so, what the nature of efforts was. Based on this research, HFRP staff identified the efforts of eighteen states, which are highlighted in our publication, *Resource Guide of Results-Based Accountability Efforts: Profiles of Selected States (1997)*.

From the eighteen states profiled, HFRP selected eight states to study in-depth. The eight case study states were chosen because they represent different foci as well as various stages of development. These states are implementing a variety of accountability approaches, including statewide and agency-level strategic planning, performance-based budgeting, and performance-based contracting. Each state has conceptualized and developed its system in response to its needs, as well as the technical, organizational, and political constraints within which it operates.

To obtain information on each of the eight states' RBA efforts, HFRP staff reviewed a variety of documentation and conducted extensive telephone interviews with key informants at the state and local levels. Staff then conducted week-long site visits to each state. During each site visit, staff interviewed a number of personnel from governors' offices, state and local agencies, legislatures, advocacy groups, and universities. During these interviews, interviewees were asked about the key aspects of the conceptualization, development, and implementation of RBA

systems. They were also asked about challenges they faced in developing these efforts and the lessons that they had learned. Where possible, HFRP staff also attended planning meetings around RBA work. For each case study, HFRP interviewed at least 30 individuals with a variety of affiliations to obtain a comprehensive and varied view of the state's efforts.

Given the variety of RBA efforts in states, the multiple entities and actors involved, and the many components of these efforts, HFRP staff developed a multi-level analytic framework to examine the data. This framework enabled HFRP to code interview data by four categories: the system (for example, strategic planning, performance budgeting, performance contracting); the governance level (for example, statewide, inter-agency, agency, local entity); the aspect of the system (for example, history, design and implementation, uses, barriers and opportunities, sustainability); and the actor (for example, governor's staff; legislators/staff; agency staff; advocacy groups). In some cases, these dimensions were further refined. This multiple coding enabled HFRP staff to compile comprehensive descriptions of efforts in each state based on a variety of perspectives. This framework also enabled staff to examine a variety of cross-case themes (for example, the use of budgeting systems by legislatures across states and the processes agencies in different states have used to choose goals and indicators). A qualitative software package, NUD*IST©, facilitated analysis of the data.

We recognize that RBA systems are evolving and will continue to evolve in response to both implementation challenges and state and national policy changes. Therefore, we stress that the information contained in these case studies describes these states' RBA initiatives as of November 1997.

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